

FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE.

Sardinia.—Mysterious Ancient Structures.—In connection with the fortified towers of Ireland, the old cupola-shaped graves or altars of the west coast of Sardinia claim particular attention. Yet, although Count Della Marmora had examined nearly 3,000 of these towers, no satisfactory result as to their origin and scope could be arrived at. The librarian of Cagliari, M. Martini, has of late discovered some manuscripts, one of so early a date as the 8th century, also a chronicle in verse on the history of Sardinia—which contains a clue to these hitherto enigmatic buildings. M. Martini will soon publish these manuscripts in full. The museum of Cagliari contains many interesting sculptures and other antiquities,—amongst them a medal in honour of Salustius, also some rare coins of Malta and Gozo. Lord Vernon is at the present time examining the Island of Sardinia.

Status in honour of Nicolas Poussin.—The municipal council of Andely, the birth-place of the great painter, have decided that the statue made by M. Brion, jun., by way of subscription, should be placed in the market-place of Grand Andely on the 15th June next, anniversary of Poussin's birth-day. On this festive occasion an ode, which has been crowned by the Société libre de l'Eure, will be read in public, to make the inauguration reasonable some of the popular festivals of old.

Paris Improvements.—The municipal commission are very active in clearing off their arrears. The place about the church of St. Severin will be enlarged, which will thus bring to light one of the oldest and most interesting buildings for the archaeologist in Paris. The widening of the Rue Mathurin St. Jacques will be now the sooner effected, as the landlords of the houses to be demolished have consented not to claim the amount allotted to them for six years. Several localities of Paris have also received of late more appropriate names.

A Philanthropist.—M. Durzy, chevalier of the Legion of Honour at Montargis, France, has bequeathed his whole fortune (500,000 fr.) to the town-council of his native city, for the sake of founding a public establishment of the following description:—A working man's school, where mathematics, music, drawing, and the English and French languages, shall be taught gratuitously, so many hours each a week; and formation of a public library. The tenth part of the yearly income is reserved for pecuniary assistance to old townspeople and others in needy circumstances. The mayor of Montargis is among the testamentary executors.

Boss.—A number of Roman sepulchral monuments have been found lately near this place, about 250 yards distant from the locality where the Roman camp was discovered in 1818 and 1819. Besides several basso-reliefs of less interest, one large slab, with an inscription (hitherto undeciphered), and one sculpture representing several kinds of trees (!), deserve notice.

FOREIGN ART-UNIONS.

Hamburg.—The committee of this Association have just published a satisfactory report of the year 1850. The great exhibition, held from 20th May to 3rd July, realised a clear profit of 1,490 marks, after paying the expenses of 5,322 marks, of which 2,572 marks were for the freight of works of art. This sum has been left for the reserve fund. During the exhibition 118 pictures had been sold for 34,000 marks. The city picture gallery had been previously completed, and was opened on the 13th of March. By this one of the chief aims of the Hamburg Art-Union has been effected, and it is only a further increase of the collection now fairly established which is required. A great ornament had been obtained for it last year by the purchase of *Cherites*, painted by M. Decaisne at Paris, for which the Art-Union paid 2,500 francs. The permanent art exhibition had been open all the time, and the number of articles exhibited was 128, of which forty were by Hamburg artists. The increase of members also is very satisfactory, being now 583 instead of the 481 in 1849. The whole expenses of the Art-

Union, in 1850, were 9,000 marks, of which 6,000 were paid for thirteen oil paintings, and sketches allotted to members in the shape of prizes.

Munich.—The exhibitions of this year are of a promising character. Ch. Morgensztern has exhibited a landscape of the Voorges mountains, which appear in the distance in an immutable illumination. I. Schrandolf has exhibited drawings for the cartoons with which the Cathedral of Spyer will be adorned, by command of King Ludwig. Thence it is to be seen, that the restoration of the old Kaiserdom is not neglected. The painter, Levi Elkan, of Cologne, known as the author of the sculptures of the cathedral of that city, has exhibited an excellent picture representing Maximilian I., at the diet of Cologne.

Art Union of Vienna.—The exhibition of this year has been visited by greater numbers than is generally the case. A historical picture by Hayez, of Milan, the Delivery of Admiral Pisani from Prison, attracts most notice. Still, the deficiency of talent, kept down for so many years by Government, comes to be felt also in the arts, and it is now earnestly thought of, to appoint foreign artists as professors of the academy, and there is no doubt that *Rask* will remain in Vienna, at least temporarily. His decided bent towards the elevating and simple, and his great capacity as a teacher, will surely act beneficially on the young school of Austrian artists.

REPEAL OF THE TAX ON LIGHT, AIR, AND HEALTH.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his modified budget, opened on the 4th inst., has acceded to the reasonableness of the objection made by us as well as others as to his proposed substitute for the window tax. He is now of opinion "that the fairest mode, the mode most consistent with principle, is to impose an uniform duty upon old and new houses." Yet such, and so unfair, is the principle of the window tax itself, that no uniform substitute will, or ever can, deal equal justice to all in the way of relief; and we fear that too stringent an urgency of objections, though perfectly valid, will only risk the attainment, just now, in any shape, of the all-important sanitary relief obtainable in the removal of restriction and expense connected with the number or the opening of windows, and the access of light and air into dwellings (not to speak even of architectural freedom in their construction—no mean consideration itself). For this reason we incline to take the most favourable view of the new proposal of the Government, which really is an improvement on the old one. Sir Charles Wood himself admits that "no uniform rate upon the value of houses will give anything like equal relief" from such a tax as that on windows, so levied as it has been; but he thinks that this objection is qualified by the fact that it is only where houses are of great value that little relief (or, as in some few cases, even a positive increase of payment) will accrue, while great relief will be given to the poorer classes inhabiting houses of comparatively little value.

"I propose," said Sir Charles, "to take a uniform rate of 8d. upon dwelling-houses, and 6d. upon those houses which contain shops. I propose to

* The power of such publications as *THE BUILDER*, and the success of those principles which such publications have advanced, were, we conceive, forcibly manifested in the following remarks by the Chancellor in his speech:—"I have looked to that which, in my opinion, would be most beneficial to the great body of our labouring and working population. They, to a great extent, are not represented in this house: they cannot put pressure upon those who sit here, which will induce them to advance their peculiar interests; and they are, therefore, in my opinion, the special objects of the care and solicitude of the Government, government being instituted for the benefit of the many, and not of the few. We have given the money food and clothing, but there remained one other matter of vital importance to them—their dwellings. It was for their sakes, and to remedy this evil, that I last year carried the repeal of the duty upon bricks. It is for their sakes that I propose this year to reduce the duty upon foreign timber. So far as the comfort of the country labourers is concerned, I do not know that more can be done for them; but there remains another class—that large portion of the labouring population who are crowded in the dark alleys and narrow streets of our towns. There is evidence beyond dispute of the effects produced upon them by the dark and noisome and unsanitary character of their dwellings. There is evidence be-

lieving them from taxation altogether all houses not exceeding 200 ft. in annual value. The result of this proposal is—I get rid of all references whatsoever to windows in any shape. I reduce the number of houses paying tax at all from 300,000 to 400,000. I give a new benefit to shops, victuallers' houses, and houses used in the occupation of land. I give a relief from taxation altogether to the extent of 1,136,000 ft. The tax I propose to retain will amount to 724,000 ft. Instead of 1,866,000 ft. It is true there are some few cases in which even under this proposal a house will be taxed in taxation; there are some cases so anomalous, that it is utterly impossible to deal with them on principle; nevertheless, all houses of the description may open windows to an unlimited extent; and therefore they will not pay what they shall pay without, as I believe, an equivalent advantage."

The new proposal has met, on the whole, with a favourable reception in the Commons.

INTENDED NEW SCHOOLS FOR THE CITY OF LONDON.

The corporation are about to erect schools for orphans at Brixton, from the designs of Mr. Bunning, their architect. There will be school-rooms for boys and for girls, and a large dining-hall, to be used in common. On the face of the gallery, which runs round the latter, Mr. Bunning proposes to introduce bas-reliefs of Hogarth's series, "The Good and Bad Apprentices." At one end of the hall there will be a statue of Whittington, and at the other a statue of the original of Scott's *Jeanie Deans*.

Mr. Bunning deserves credit for the endeavours he uniformly makes to bring the sister arts into union.

Externally the building is of simple (Italian) character, and is constructed of red bricks with stone dressings.

CONSOLIDATION OF PAVING BOARDS IN SCOTLAND.

As to the remarks by "A District Surveyor" relative to the general consolidation of paving boards, allow me to say, in Scotland the watching, lighting, cleansing, paving, and covering are now all under one general board of police management. To illustrate the bad effects of divided management, I may mention that some years ago there existed within the present municipal police boundary of the city of Glasgow, no less than four distinct police establishments acting quite independently of each other. The consequence of this system of divided management was, marked inefficiency in every one of the departments mentioned.

Since the whole have been amalgamated, and brought under one general management, improvement has been the order of the day. Many miles of sewers have been laid. Streets formerly nearly impassable are paved. Whole districts formerly enveloped in darkness are now lighted up; and last, but not least, the authorities are steadily purchasing old and ruinous tenements, with the laudable view of soon being able to open up the wynds and vennels of the city. The best of it is that all these improvements have been carried into effect free of any additional assessment on the rate-payers. I will tell you how this united general board is enabled to do so.

In the first place, they contract for their supplies of work and material on an extensive scale, and thus not only secure the services of respectable contractors, but effect a saving. As, for instance, the gas company, on the condition of being allowed to supply the gas required for the street lamps for a period of ten years in place of annual contract, made an statement in their price equal to 1,000 ft. per annum. The contractor for the supply of

wood dispose of the effects which those who are crowded into dark cellars and ill-ventilated apartments suffer from that cause. We have evidence in abundance of the untimely growth, the deformed limbs, the brain constitution, the cultivated intellects, which are the consequences of the deprivation of air and light. We determined that, so soon as it was in our power, we should do all we could to place the labouring population in a better sanitary condition; and that, so far as depended upon us, we would endeavour to remedy that state of things which was proved beyond dispute to be the cause of this misery and death. I shall feel that having contributed to cheapen their food and clothing, and to give them the benefit of dwellings as cheap as can be afforded, we shall cheerfully consent with pleasure to bestow upon the labouring population in our towns the unrestricted enjoyment of the light and air of heaven.